

Investigation of breastfeeding practices and influencing factors among Chinese mothers in a lactation clinic: A cross-sectional study

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April 16, 2024

Abstract

Aim: The aim of this study was to explore and describe the breastfeeding status and the breastfeeding problems of women visiting the lactation clinic, and identify factors that influenced maternal breastfeeding practices. **Methods:** A cross-sectional survey was distributed to 948 Chinese mothers. Multinomial logistic regression was used to evaluate the associations between risk factors and breastfeeding patterns at different postpartum stages. **Results:** Among 948 Chinese mothers, 389 (41.0%) visited the lactation clinic for milk supply problems, 126 (13.3%) for nipple problems, 230 (24.3%) for breast problems, 85 (9.0%) for breastfeeding methods, 69 (7.3%) for counseling related to breastfeeding knowledge, and 49 (5.1%) for infant problems. Breastfeeding problems were distinct at different postpartum stages. Within 4 weeks after delivery, participants who had no history of disease were more prone to exclusive breastfeeding (OR = 8.041, 95% CI [1.526, 42.376]) or partial breastfeeding (OR = 4.822, 95% CI [1.157, 20.103]) compared to formula feeding. Moreover, between 4 weeks and 3 months postpartum, participants whose intended breastfeeding time was shorter were more prone to formula feeding than to exclusive breastfeeding (OR = 0.379, 95% CI [0.146, 0.980]) or partial breastfeeding (OR = 0.369, 95% CI [0.139, 0.980]). **Conclusion:** There is great need to combine a routine post-discharge lactation visit with antenatal breastfeeding instruction so as to improve breastfeeding initiation and prevent and solve breastfeeding problems better and more efficiently.

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